

what, military construction appropriations. This same entity has already got \$7.2 million out of a MilCon bill. I am informed the members are the Gay and Robinson Sugar Company, the island of Hawaii, and the Hawaiian Commercial Sugar Company, the island of Maui. These are producer-owned sugarcane mills that own the land.

Let me repeat. The same cooperative got a bailout a year ago. Are we now going to start providing these two companies with annual supplemental appropriations bailouts? I urge my colleagues to question what we are doing.

Let me quote from the administration's Statement of Administrative Policy again:

In 2005, many crops had record or near record production and U.S. farm sector cash receipts were the second highest ever. Furthermore, the proposed level of assistance is excessive and may overcompensate certain producers for their losses.

What are we trying to do with this bill? We are trying to tell our farmers, no matter where you are or what you farm, don't bother with crop insurance because come next year's supplemental, we will dole out far more than you need.

As Secretary Mike Johanns said:

I have spent the last week studying the bill to try to get an understanding of the mechanics of the bill, but taking it a step further, trying to get an understanding of what we have done for disaster relief in the last year. And what is the agricultural economy like that may lay the foundation for somebody to say we need disaster relief.

He said for the 2005 and 2006 crop years, despite pockets of weather problems, "Every year you see them. For a country this big, it is unusual not to have some weather issues out there."

But despite pockets of problems, production and yields set records or near records recently.

Johanns' conclusions, after getting answers to his questions: "I got all that data and evidence, and that got me thinking, 'What are they trying to do with that bill?'" He is talking about the supplemental bill before us. "So I studied the bill and I must admit, my forehead started wrinkling."

Well, as noted in Saturday's Washington Post editorial, "Should Farming Be the Nation's Only Risk-Free Enterprise?" perhaps the intent in providing this \$6 million to the Hawaiian sugar growers is to prop up a sugar industry which has fallen on hard times. With rising diabetes and child obesity rates which have more than doubled since 1977, maybe sugar isn't in demand as in previous years. Maybe the efforts by parents to have soft drink machines stripped from public schools is having a prolific effect on sugar production. If only that were the case. In reality, consumption of sweeteners in the U.S. has risen from 113 pounds per person per year in 1966 to around 142 pounds per person per year in 2004. At that rate Americans consume the equivalent of about 1 teaspoon of sugar per hour every 24 hours, 7 days a week.

The U.S. News & World Report compared our sugar fix to other, more nu-

tritious agricultural commodities and found that Americans ate an abysmal 8.3 pounds of broccoli a year in 2003, something I can understand.

Again I question the need to spend more taxpayer dollars on sugarcane. Didn't we just vote last week not to fund a \$15 million marketing program for seafood? Certainly less than a week later we are not going to turn around and vote to fund marketing to support this effort.

Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays on this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas and nays are requested. Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, the provision under attack at this moment was not snuck in during the dark of night. It was openly discussed with the authorizing committee and was granted approval. It was openly discussed with the Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture and it was granted approval. That is why this provision is in the supplemental. It was approved by the authorizers and the appropriators. Thirdly, it was openly discussed with the Secretary of Agriculture, and the Secretary issued a statement declaring that this was a disaster area.

Why do we call this a disaster? In one of those strange natural phenomena, for 40 days and 40 nights it rained in Hawaii. In one spot, it rained 126 inches in those 40 days. The average in most areas was 3 inches a day. Obviously, with such sustained heavy rains, you would have devastation. Many families lost their homes. Private property and public property were destroyed.

The \$6 million in this provision is to assist the two sugar companies, Gay and Robinson and Hawaiian Commercial and Sugar, with their crop losses, damage to their irrigation canal system, and washed out roads.

It may interest my colleagues to know that on the island of Kauai, that plantation suffered more than 100 miles of roads being severely damaged. They are washed out and require complete rebuilding. Some of the most critical roads were the access roads to irrigation, and these will have to be rebuilt.

In addition to the roads, the irrigation infrastructure on the island of Kauai was totally damaged and destroyed. This infrastructure damage has two costs. One is the cost of repairing, obviously, and the other is the sugar losses due to production disruptions. And the same can be said for the island of Maui.

The yield losses alone for the two companies will far exceed the amount we are requesting for assistance. Losses have occurred because of this damage.

In summary, heavy rains caused tremendous infrastructure damages. The

actual repair or reconstruction costs are much higher than the amount we are seeking.

I hope my colleagues will show some compassion and understanding. It is an emergency.

I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, this provision was included in the committee bill in the agricultural disaster title of the supplemental because of severe weather-related damage to Hawaii's sugarcane crop this year.

Hawaii sustained heavy rains and flooding from February 20 through April 2, devastating and destroying public and private property. The funds were considered by the committee to be necessary to assist sugarcane farmers through their cooperatives with cane crop losses.

They also sustained damage to their irrigation canal systems, and there were public roads that were washed out resulting from the heavy rains.

I support the position of the Senator from Hawaii on this amendment and urge the amendment be defeated.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I will be very brief.

One of the things we know we are all going to have to look at in the 2007 farm bill is how do we continue down this road and be able to afford it.

The 2002 farm bill put in what was called crop insurance. Every time we put in a program that undermines the incentive to use crop insurance, all we do is add it to the deficit, and we come back.

There is no question there are some needs, and probably legitimate, but what this appropriation does is create an incentive for people not to use crop insurance. That is exactly what it does.

So if we want to unwind further and raise the costs for the American people of the farm bill we have today, all we have to do is keep this kind of funding in, and we will undo and make sure we spend more money in the future.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I will be brief.

I understand Hawaii experienced severe flooding this winter. It should be pointed out that the heavy tropical rains did not lead to a Presidential disaster declaration. Surely the flooding impacted a broad range of agricultural commodities in Hawaii, not just sugarcane growers, and the Secretary of Agriculture is providing assistance under existing USDA disaster recovery programs. These programs will help farmers with noninsured crops, debt management, emergency loans, infrastructure repair, and farmland rehabilitation. Do we really need an additional earmark of \$6 million for Hawaiian sugarcane growers on top of the assistance already offered by the USDA?